

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THAT EXECUTIVE AGENCIES FORM A TASK FORCE TO STUDY BARRIERS TO SUCCESSFUL REINTEGRATION OF PAROLEES INTO COMMUNITIES.

WHEREAS, seventy-two percent of parolees under supervision in New Mexico fail to successfully complete their parole; and

WHEREAS, coordination of release and reentry planning for parolees by executive agencies is limited; and

WHEREAS, significant barriers to employment, public benefits, housing, family reintegration, education and legal immigration status impede parolees' efforts to successfully rejoin their families and communities; and

WHEREAS, establishing more effective communication between executive agencies may reduce those barriers and may also reduce recidivism rates for parolees; and

WHEREAS, barriers built into the current system of parole, although intended to reduce crime and enhance community safety, have had a counterproductive effect; and

WHEREAS, those barriers have made it more difficult for parolees to successfully reenter communities, care for their children and avoid criminal activity; and

WHEREAS, the corrections department has initiated a program of parole coordinators, located in four regions of the

state, to improve services to parolees; and

WHEREAS, that program should be monitored and, if successful, expanded;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the secretary of corrections, or his designee, convene a task force to study barriers to successful reintegration of parolees into their communities and to improve coordination of release and reentry planning for parolees by executive agencies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force study barriers to employment, public benefits, housing, family reintegration, education and legal immigration status that hamper parolees' efforts to rejoin their families and communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force include the secretary of human services, or her designee; the secretary of children, youth and families, or her designee; the secretary of health, or her designee; the secretary of labor, or his designee; the secretary of public education, or her designee; a representative from the New Mexico women's justice project; and a representative from the New Mexico center on law and poverty; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force submit a report and its recommendations to the interim corrections oversight and justice committee and to the interim legislative

health and human services committee no later than November 1, 2004; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the secretary of corrections, the secretary of human services, the secretary of children, youth and families, the secretary of health, the secretary of labor, the secretary of public education, the New Mexico women's justice project and the New Mexico center on law and poverty.